

Inexpensive Ideas to Enrich Your Outdoor Learning Environment

Plant a tree, shrub, or bush

Blueberries and oak leaf hydrangea are good choices for versatile bushes. A three foot tall fig tree will double in size in one year and will provide a shady retreat where children can play while still in your site.

Hang a bird feeder

Consider using the area right outside the window or create a bird habitat.

Create a special place for digging

Provide shovels, scoops, and buckets for children to dig in a specific place.

Designate a table or shelf as an outside discovery center

Encourage children to bring natural items to the center and start collections of rocks, seeds, pine cones and leaves.

Plant a food garden

Consider using plants native to your area such as okra, black-eyed peas, or a three sisters garden of beans, corn and squash.



**North Carolina Outdoor Learning
Environments Alliance**

**For additional information about
Alliance work, see:**

<http://www.ncprek.nc.gov/OLE/OLEhome.asp>

North Carolina Outdoor Learning Environments Alliance



*Working to improve the
quality of outdoor
environments and
experiences for all children
throughout the state.*

The North Carolina Outdoor Learning Environments Alliance



is a statewide collaborative initiated by the NC Office of Early Learning and the NC Division of Child Development. It is comprised of organizations, agencies, and individuals focused on improving the quality of outdoor environments for children.

The Leadership Team

Alliance Co-Chairs:

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Other members represent statewide agencies and organizations with an interest in supporting children's outdoor play and learning.



Outdoor Learning Environments Alliance Goals:



1. Establish an arena for collaboration among organizations working in early care and education to:
 - share information across systems,
 - identify strengths, needs, and barriers related to outdoor play and learning, and
 - set long term and short term goals to improve outdoor learning environments for children.
2. Advocate for higher value placed on outdoor play and learning and development of high quality outdoor learning environments.
3. Offer input to state and local agencies on policy development and identified needs for policy change related to outdoor learning environments.
4. Provide guidance to develop a strategic technical assistance plan for early care and education professionals.
5. Provide guidance for use of funds and seek additional funding for activities to address identified goals (projects, initiatives, publications).
6. Identify existing sites and develop additional sites statewide to demonstrate high quality outdoor play and learning through programming and physical design incorporating principles of universal access.

FAMILY OUTDOOR FUN!

Environmental Education Centers

<http://www.eenorthcarolina.org/eecenters.htm>

North Carolina Zoo– Asheboro

<http://www.nczoo.org/>

NC Botanical Garden-Chapel Hill

<http://ncbg.unc.edu/>

Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden-Belmont

<http://dsbg.org/>

Greensboro Gardens-Greensboro

<http://www.greensborobeautiful.org/TheGardens.htm>

North Carolina State Parks

<http://www.ncparks.gov/Visit/main.php>

